

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Following today's announcement from the United States Department of Agriculture on a new Dairy Economic Loss Assistance Payment program, Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) released this statement.

"Our Valley's dairy producers are the best in the nation and California has been ground zero for the major meltdown in the industry. I met with Secretary Vilsack in February of this year to discuss the crisis facing our dairy producers. Today's announcement by USDA to create a new Dairy Economic Loss Assistance Payment (DELAP) program offers almost no viable assistance to our dairy producers. In fact, it's a slap in the face to every dairy producer in California. California leads our country in dairy production; we produce almost 25% of America's milk, cheese and cream, yet California will receive approximately 10% of the assistance. The payments most dairy families will receive won't even cover a month's feed bill, let alone help dairy producers obtain a new line of credit at the bank. I received assurances that the assistance USDA provided would be distributed fair and equitably. I don't know a dairyman in my district who believes this is fair for California.

"It's unclear if USDA understands the complexities of California agriculture. I am thoroughly disappointed how USDA designed this program, and I will ensure Secretary Vilsack hears from me and from each and every dairy producer in the San Joaquin Valley."